

Information Bulletin

Grade 6 Social Studies
1997-98

~~AE CUR
ACH~~

Alberta
EDUCATION

This document was written primarily for:

Students	✓
Teachers	✓ Grade 6 Teachers
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	✓ Superintendents

DISTRIBUTION: Superintendents of Schools • School Principals and Teachers • The Alberta Teachers' Association • Alberta School Boards Association • Officials of Alberta Education • General Public upon Request

This bulletin contains general information about the Provincial Achievement Testing Program and information specific to the Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test. **This bulletin replaces all previous bulletins.**

Copyright 1997, the Crown in Right of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Education, Alberta Education, Student Evaluation Branch, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2. All rights reserved. Additional copies may be obtained from the Student Evaluation Branch, 403-427-0010.

Alberta educators may reproduce this bulletin for educational purposes.

September 1997

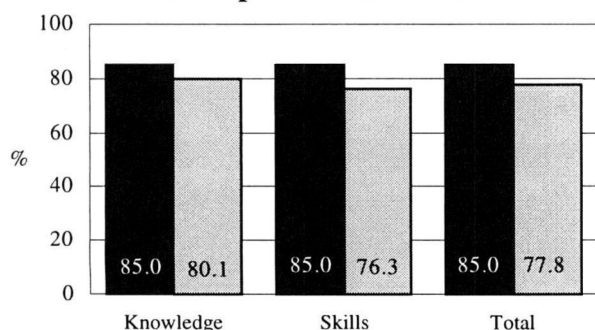
Contents

Looking Back: Highlights of 1997	1
Who Wrote the Test?.....	1
What Was the Test Like?	1
How Well Did Students Do?.....	1
Has Achievement Changed Since Last Year?.....	2
Commentary and Sample Questions from the Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test 1997.....	2
Reporting the Results	5
 Looking Ahead: What is Upcoming for 1998.....	 6
General Information	6
Administering the Tests	6
Schedule	7
Students in French Programs.....	8
Marking Achievement Tests Locally	8
 Standards: Curriculum, Assessment, Achievement.....	 8
Definitions	8
Confirming Standards	9
Purpose of Assessment Standards	9
Description of the Social Studies Assessment Standards.....	9
Acceptable Standard.....	9
Standard of Excellence.....	10
 Grade 6 Social Studies Assessment	 10
General Description.....	10
Blueprint.....	11
Practice Questions	11
Key and Descriptors for Practice Questions.....	19
 Preparing Students for the Test	 20
Suggestions for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions.....	20
 Alberta Education Contact.....	 20

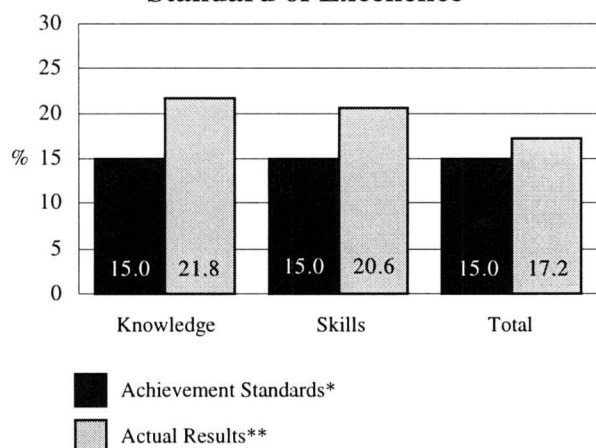
Looking Back: Highlights of 1997

This information provides teachers, school administrators, and the public with an overview of the results for the June 1997 Grade 6 Social Studies provincial assessment. It complements the detailed school and jurisdiction reports.

Acceptable Standard



Standard of Excellence



*the percentage of students in the province expected to meet the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence

**the percentage of students in the province who met the standards (based on those who wrote)

Who Wrote the Test?

All students registered in Grade 6 were expected to write the 1997 Social Studies Achievement Test. A total of 38 553 students completed the test. Only a small proportion of students did not write the test: 2.7% were absent and 3.1% were excused from writing by their superintendent.

What Was the Test Like?

The assessment instrument had 50 multiple-choice questions in three topic areas: Topic A is Local Government, Topic B is Greece: An Ancient Civilization, and Topic C is China: A Pacific Rim Nation. Two learning domains were assessed: Knowledge (20 questions) and Skills (30 questions).

How Well Did Students Do?

As shown by the graphs, the number of students meeting the *acceptable standard* was lower than expected, whereas the number of students meeting the *standard of excellence* was higher than expected. In both cases, more students met standards in knowledge than in skills.

In 3.4% of the schools, the percentage of students meeting the *acceptable standard* was significantly above expectations for the province. In 65% of the schools, the percentage was not significantly different from provincial expectations. In 31.5% of the schools, the percentage of students meeting the *acceptable standard* was significantly below provincial expectations. Schools where fewer than five students wrote the Grade 6 test are not included in the calculations.

The results presented in this report are based on scores achieved by all students except those in French programs. Results for students writing in French are reported separately.

Has Achievement Changed Since Last Year?

Results indicate that student achievement in Grade 6 Social Studies in 1997 is similar to that of the last administration in 1996.

Commentary and Sample Questions from the Grade 6 Social Studies Achievement Test 1997

Sample questions from the test and accompanying discussion are provided to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of students meeting the *acceptable standard* and the *standard of excellence*. For each question, an asterisk is placed beside the correct response.

10. Of the following activities in Ancient Greece, psychological needs were **best** met by
- A. holding court cases
 - B. protecting the city-state
 - C. having public meetings
 - * D. worshipping the gods
37. From which port would Alberta goods **most likely** be shipped to China?
- A. Halifax
 - B. Montreal
 - C. Toronto
 - * D. Vancouver

Acceptable Standard

For **question 10**, students needed to know examples of psychological needs. Of students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence*, 73% chose the correct response.

For **question 37**, students needed to know the location of China in relation to Canada. Only 64% of students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly.

Use the following information to answer question 23.

Government Threatens to Close Hospital

"I pay taxes. I think the government should keep our local hospital open. It is important to be able to get medical help close by."



"If it is a concern to you, you and your community should pay for it. It is not necessary to have a hospital in every community. It is a waste of taxpayers' money to have hospitals open if they are not widely used."



A provincial government considered closing hospitals in one region of the province. Some people supported the idea while others were against it. People affected by the proposed closures sent petitions to their local and provincial government representatives, asking that their hospitals be kept open. After reviewing the information, the provincial government decided to keep only Greenview Hospital open.

Results of Petitions

Hospital	Age of Hospital	Number of Signatures	Population Served by Hospital
Greenview	19 years	15 231	45 000
Charity	8 years	20 107	40 000
Central	8 years	12 544	30 000
Citizens	14 years	15 368	35 000

For **question 23**, students needed to interpret information about decision making by elected officials. Results indicate that 73% of students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence* were able to do this.

The strengths of students who met the *acceptable standard* include:

- making inferences and drawing conclusions from information presented as text
- understanding concepts related to basic needs
- interpreting information to identify main idea

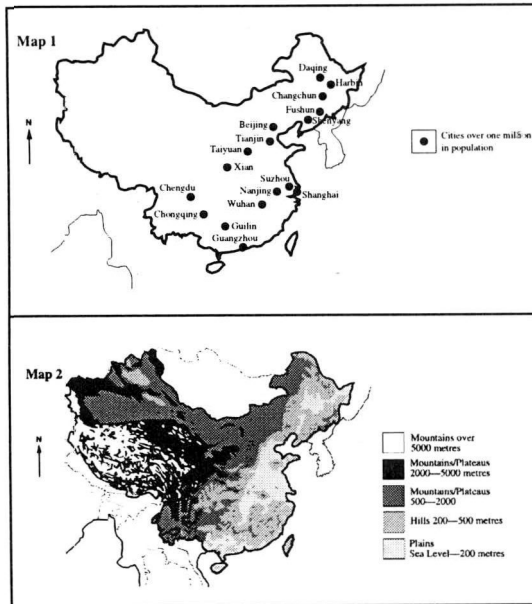
Many of these students did not do as well as expected in:

- using longitude and latitude
- interpreting maps
- working with chronology and time-lines
- understanding the differences in needs met by the various levels of government

23. The **most likely** reason for the provincial government decision was that

- * A. the largest population is served by Greenview Hospital
- B. half of the people in the Charity Hospital area signed the petition
- C. less than half of the people in the Greenview Hospital area signed the petition
- D. more people supported Charity Hospital than Greenview Hospital

Use the following maps to answer question 43.



43. In what range of elevation are most cities over one million people located?
- A. Over 5000 metres
 - B. 2000 to 5000 metres
 - C. 500 to 2000 metres
 - * D. Sea level to 500 metres

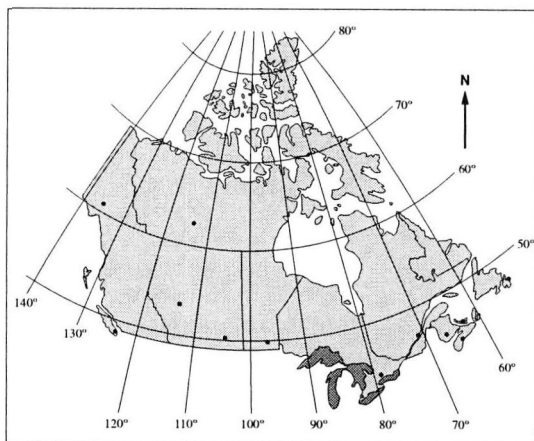
19. What is the **best** generalization that can be made about governments in Canada?
- A. Canadians agree that all governments should provide the same services.
 - * B. Levels of government help meet some of our basic needs.
 - C. Provincial government meets most of our basic needs.
 - D. Representatives are elected based on how well they provide services.

Standard of Excellence

For **question 43**, students needed to infer relationships from data shown on maps. Only 55% of the students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence* answered this question correctly, whereas 90% of students meeting the *standard of excellence* did so.

For **question 19**, students needed to understand that different needs are met by different levels of government. Only 52% of the students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence* were successful with this question, whereas 76% of students meeting the *standard of excellence* were.

Use the following information to answer question 18.



18. The location of the capital of the Yukon is

- A. 62°N and 114°W
- * B. 61°N and 135°W
- C. 114°N and 62° W
- D. 135°N and 61° W

For **question 18**, students needed to use the latitude–longitude grid to identify location of a provincial/territorial capital. This involved not only using the latitude–longitude grid system, but also knowing the names of the provincial and territorial capitals. Only 36% of students who met the *acceptable standard* but not the *standard of excellence* and 69% of students who met the *standard of excellence* were able to do this.

Students who met the *standard of excellence* had strengths that include:

- interpreting information to identify main idea
- analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information from different kinds of sources (e.g., text, charts, and graphs) to draw conclusions
- understanding the relationships between individuals and government

Many of these students did not do as well as expected in:

- using longitude and latitude

Reporting the Results

On August 22, 1997, each school jurisdiction received electronically a district report and individual school reports regarding their students' achievement, as well as guidelines for interpreting these results in relation to provincial standards.

To facilitate reflection on school programs, we expect that results will be shared with all school staff (not just teachers of grades 3, 6, and 9), as well as with parents and the community.

Two copies of an individual profile for each student will be sent to the school that the student will attend in September. We expect that the Parent Copy will be given to parents and the School Copy will remain with the student's record.

The following Achievement tests are secured:

Grade 6 Mathematics, 1995
ALL tests from 1996 and 1997

Looking Ahead: What is Upcoming for 1998

General Information

Purpose

The purpose of the Achievement Testing Program is to

- determine if students are learning what they are expected to learn
- report to Albertans how well students have achieved provincial standards at given points in their schooling
- assist schools, jurisdictions, and the province in monitoring and improving student learning

Enhance Student Learning

Careful examination and interpretation of the results can help identify areas of relative strength and weakness in student achievement. Teachers and administrators can use this information in planning and delivering relevant and effective instruction in relation to broad, general learnings in the *Program of Studies*.

Enable Accountability

Alberta Education and school jurisdiction personnel are responsible for ensuring that the highest quality education is provided to all students in the province.

Information about achievement is provided to

- schools and jurisdictions
- parents
- the public

so that they may know how well students in their schools are meeting local targets and provincial expectations.

Interpreting Results

Achievement tests assess only part of what is to be learned. In addition, many factors contribute to student achievement. Personnel at the jurisdiction and school levels are in the best position to appropriately interpret, use, and communicate jurisdiction and school results in the local context.

The Provincial Achievement Testing Program provides teachers, parents, students, school administrators, Alberta Education, and the public with information about what students know and can do in relation to provincial standards. Group results are reported at school, district, and provincial levels to improve learning opportunities for students.

The assessments are administered in two subject areas at Grade 3—language arts and mathematics—and in four subject areas at Grades 6 and 9—language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

The assessments are based on provincial standards that reflect important learnings in the subject areas listed above. Classroom teachers from across the province are extensively involved in developing and field testing the assessment instruments.

Administering the Tests

Information about the nature of the provincial assessments as well as their administration to special needs students can be found in the *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program*, which is mailed each fall to all superintendents and principals.

Schedule

The schedule for administering achievement tests in the 1997–98 school year is mandated.

January 1998

The January achievement tests for Grade 9 schools on a semester system must be administered according to the following schedule:

Wednesday, January 21	9:00 to 11:30 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part A
Thursday, January 22	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Science
Friday, January 23	9:00 to 11:30 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie A
Monday, January 26	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part B
Tuesday, January 27	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Mathematics
Wednesday, January 28	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Social Studies
Thursday, January 29	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie B

May 1998

The written component of the language arts achievement tests for grades 3, 6, and 9 must be administered according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, May 26	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 3 English Language Arts Part A
	9:00 to 11:30 A.M.	Grades 6 and 9 English Language Arts Part A
Thursday, May 28	9:00 to 11:30 A.M.	Grades 6 and 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie A

June 1998

The machine-scorable component of achievement tests for grades 3, 6, and 9 must be administered according to the following schedule:

Monday, June 15	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 3 English Language Arts Part B
	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 6 English Language Arts Part B
Wednesday, June 17	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 3 Mathematics
	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 6 Mathematics
Thursday, June 18	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 6 Social Studies
	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
Friday, June 19	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Science
Monday, June 22	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 6 Science
	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part B
Tuesday, June 23	9:00 to 10:30 A.M.	Grade 6 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Mathematics
Wednesday, June 24	9:00 to 10:45 A.M.	Grade 9 Social Studies

The tests that will be administered each year are:

Grade 3

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing*
and *Part B: Reading*)
Mathematics (English and French forms)

Grade 6

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing*
and *Part B: Reading*)
Français/French Language Arts
(*Partie A: Production écrite* and
Partie B: Lecture)
Mathematics (English and French forms)
Science (English and French forms)
Social Studies (English and French forms)

Grade 9

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing*
and *Part B: Reading*)
Français/French Language Arts
(*Partie A: Production écrite* and
Partie B: Lecture)
Mathematics (English and French forms)
Science (English and French forms)
Social Studies (English and French forms)

Students in French Programs

All students in French programs must write the French form of the achievement tests. Alberta Education will send a checklist to schools in January requesting an indication of how many English or French tests are required. These forms must be returned through jurisdiction offices by mid-February.

Marking Achievement Tests Locally

Teachers are able to mark the tests before returning them to Alberta Education. Teachers can use the results as part of an individual student's year-end assessment, as well as for planning instruction.

Standards: Curriculum, Assessment, Achievement

The move toward results-based curricula has re-emphasized the need for a clear delineation of standards and their purpose. All standards and all methods of setting standards require judgement.

The process of setting a standard can only be as good as the judgements that go into it. The standard will depend on whose judgements are involved in the process. In this sense, all standards are subjective. Yet once a standard has been set, the decisions based on it can be made objectively. Instead of a separate set of judgements for each test-taker, you will have the same set of judgements applied to all test-takers. Standards cannot be objectively determined, but they can be objectively applied.¹

Definitions

The Achievement Testing Program is directly concerned with three different but related standards. These provincial standards are curriculum standards, assessment standards, and achievement standards. Local targets are also described in this section.

- **Curriculum Standards** are the expected student learnings sequenced into grade levels. They include broad statements of knowledge, skills, and attitude expectations against which student performance is judged. These standards are established in the process of curriculum development and are found in the *Program of Studies* produced for each subject.
- **Assessment Standards** are the criteria adopted for judging actual student achievement relative to curriculum standards. They are ultimately expressed

¹ Passing Scores; Samuel A. Livingston, Michael J. Zieky; Educational Testing Service, 1982.

and applied to test scores. They are derived from answers to questions such as: What scores must a student obtain or how many questions on a given test must a student answer correctly in order for his/her performance on the test to be judged as acceptable or excellent?

- **Achievement Standards** are judgements that specify what percentages of students are expected to achieve an acceptable and an excellent level of achievement in relation to each course of studies; i.e., the relevant curriculum standards. They reflect community judgement about what is an appropriate expectation for students. It is important to point out that this judgement is not a prediction of the percentage of students who will actually achieve acceptable or excellent levels, but rather a specification of the percentage of students at a given grade or year in school who are *expected* to achieve the acceptable (85%) or excellent standard (15%). **The 85% of students expected to meet the acceptable standard includes those who meet the standard of excellence.** These standards apply to school, jurisdiction, and provincial performance.
- **Local targets** are goals set in schools/districts to focus plans for helping students learn what is expected by the provincial government. These local targets reflect the specific needs of students, the views of teachers, school administration, and the local community, and the resources available to provide learning opportunities for students.

Confirming Standards

Confirming standards is a process in which some teachers who are selected for marking are asked to make judgements about the achievement test to answer the question of whether province-wide performance is good enough. For more information on the confirming standards process, refer to Appendix A of the *Achievement Testing Program Provincial Report, June 1993*

Administration. For information on the selection of teachers for participation in the confirming standards process, refer to the current *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program*.

Purpose of Assessment Standards

The provincial standards are the basis upon which we assess how well students have learned Social Studies by the end of Grade 6. These standards reflect the essential learnings that all Alberta students are expected to achieve. Provincial standards are useful, therefore, for assessing Grade 6 students in all types of school programs—public, private, and home education. By comparing actual results with provincial standards, decisions can be made about whether achievement is, in fact, “good enough.”

Description of the Social Studies Assessment Standards

The following statements describe what is expected of Grade 6 students who are meeting the *acceptable standard* or the *standard of excellence* on independent work at the end of the Grade 6 Social Studies program. These statements represent the standards against which student achievement will be measured.

Acceptable Standard

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* in Grade 6 Social Studies have a basic understanding of the concepts, generalizations, and skills fundamental to the program.

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* know that all people have similar physical, social, and psychological needs. They understand these concepts and are able to give examples of each. They know how individual and societal needs are met by local government; as well, they have a basic understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

These students independently understand, organize, analyze, synthesize, and apply social studies related ideas and concepts in simple and familiar situations. They are able to apply their knowledge of basic concepts such as human needs, class structure, rights, responsibilities, local government, lobby groups, communication, technology, and sharing.

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* are able to distinguish between fact and opinion, compare maps of different scales and compute distances, and organize information into charts and graphs. Students who meet the *acceptable standard* are able to use high-level thinking skills in familiar contexts.

The expectation is that these students are successful with familiar tasks and can compare and contrast the ways in which different societies meet basic needs. Also, they can analyze and synthesize information to make inferences and draw conclusions about how traditions, customs, individuals, and government influence the ways in which people meet their basic needs.

Standard of Excellence

Students who meet the *standard of excellence* in Grade 6 Social Studies have internalized most, if not all, of the concepts and generalizations fundamental to social studies. They are confident learners who demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of how individual and societal needs are met in different societies. They are able to transfer their knowledge and understanding to unfamiliar situations.

Students achieving the *standard of excellence* are able to deal with complex details and ideas. They are able to organize and interpret a wide variety of information and abstract material to some degree. They are able to apply high-level thinking skills to unfamiliar contexts.

Grade 6 Social Studies Assessment

General Description

The assessment consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. The student is required to use a separate answer sheet.

The assessment is designed to be completed in 60 minutes. However, additional time of up to 30 minutes may be provided to allow students to finish.

The test is based on three social studies topics.

Topic A

Local Government

Topic B

Greece: An Ancient Civilization

Topic C

China: A Pacific Rim Nation

The knowledge and skills components are integrated in the test. Neither participation skills nor attitude objectives are directly evaluated on this test. However, they contribute to students' ability to do the test.

Blueprint

This blueprint shows the reporting categories and topics under which questions are classified. The percentages of questions in each section are approximate.

Reporting Category		Topic A Local Government	Topic B Greece: An Ancient Civilization	Topic C China: A Pacific Rim Nation	Proportion of Score
Knowledge	Understands Generalizations, Concepts, Related Facts, and Content	14%	13%	13%	40%
Skills	Locating, Organizing, Interpreting Information	20%	20%	20%	60%
	Geography/Mapping				
	Analyzing, Synthesizing, Evaluating				
Proportion of Score		34%	33%	33%	100%

Practice Questions

Examples of multiple-choice questions are presented on the following pages. The examples illustrate the nature and complexity of the questions that will appear on the 1998 test. Teachers are encouraged to familiarize students with the types of questions that will appear on the test by discussing these practice questions with them.

Information for each practice question is provided in the *Key and Descriptors for Practice Questions* on page 19. Note that the selection includes examples of

knowledge and skills questions for each of the three topics. The weightings assigned on the actual test are indicated in the blueprint above.

The questions on pages 12 to 18 appeared on the 1997 Achievement Test. These questions, along with questions from previous bulletins, can be used to prepare students for the 1998 Achievement Test. Other questions from the 1997 and 1996 tests remain secured (see *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program* for details).

Use the following map to answer questions 1 and 2.



1. The map supports which of the following statements?

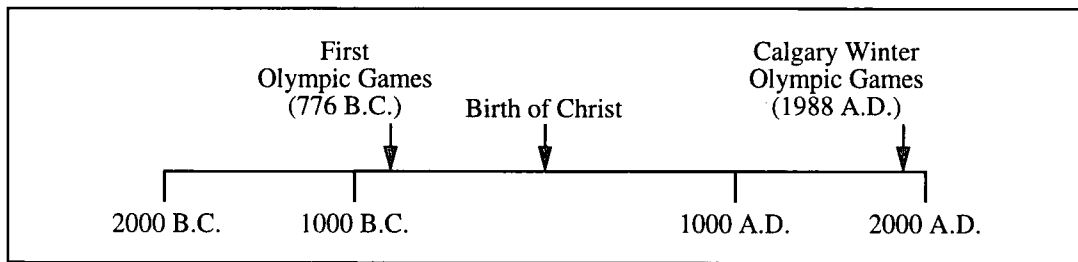
- A. Good farmland is limited to the north.
- B. Major rivers flow through cities.
- C. The land is very mountainous.
- D. The climate is hot and dry.

2. The approximate location of Athens is

- A. 24°N and 38°E
- B. 26°N and 42°E
- C. 38°N and 24°E
- D. 42°N and 26°E

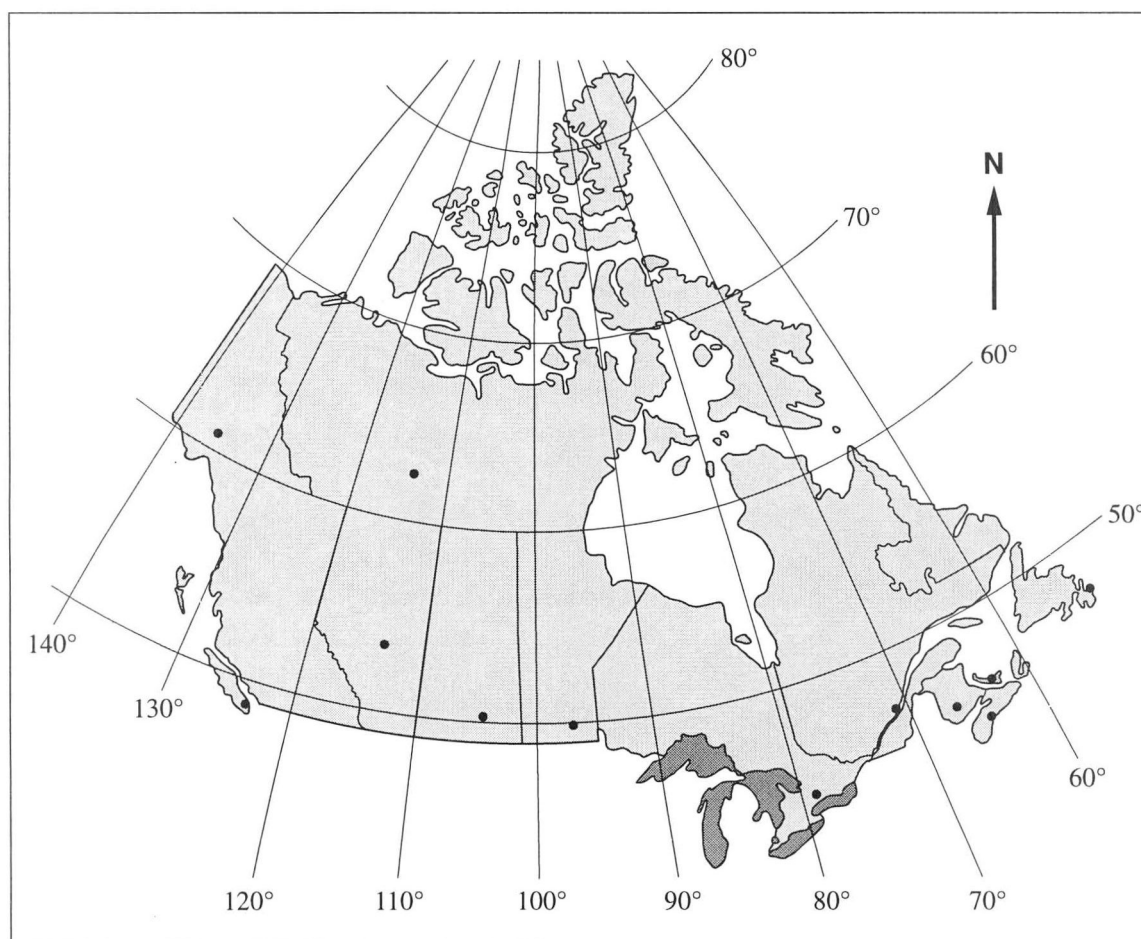
3. Of the following activities in Ancient Greece, psychological needs were **best** met by
- A. holding court cases
 - B. protecting the city-state
 - C. having public meetings
 - D. worshipping the gods
4. The **original** purpose for holding the Olympic Games was to
- A. provide a regular festival in honour of Zeus
 - B. bring the people of Ancient Greece together
 - C. teach purity of mind, body, thought, and deed
 - D. allow local champions to compete against other athletes

Use the following time-line to answer question 5.



5. Between the first Olympic Games, held in 776 B.C., and the Calgary Winter Olympic Games, held in 1988 A.D., how many years passed?
- A. 776
 - B. 1212
 - C. 1988
 - D. 2764

Use the following information to answer question 6.



6. The location of the capital of the Yukon is
- A. 62°N and 114°W
 - B. 61°N and 135°W
 - C. 114°N and 62° W
 - D. 135°N and 61° W
-
7. What is the **best** generalization that can be made about governments in Canada?
- A. Canadians agree that all governments should provide the same services.
 - B. Levels of government help meet some of our basic needs.
 - C. Provincial government meets most of our basic needs.
 - D. Representatives are elected based on how well they provide services.

Use the following information to answer questions 8 and 9.

Government Threatens to Close Hospital

"I pay taxes. I think the government should keep our local hospital open. It is important to be able to get medical help close by."

"If it is a concern to you, you and your community should pay for it. It is not necessary to have a hospital in every community. It is a waste of taxpayers' money to have hospitals open if they are not widely used."



A provincial government considered closing hospitals in one region of the province. Some people supported the idea while others were against it. People affected by the proposed closures sent petitions to their local and provincial government representatives, asking that their hospitals be kept open. After reviewing the information, the provincial government decided to keep only Greenview Hospital open.

Results of Petitions

Hospital	Age of Hospital	Number of Signatures	Population Served by Hospital
Greenview	19 years	15 231	45 000
Charity	8 years	20 107	40 000
Central	8 years	12 544	30 000
Citizens	14 years	15 368	35 000

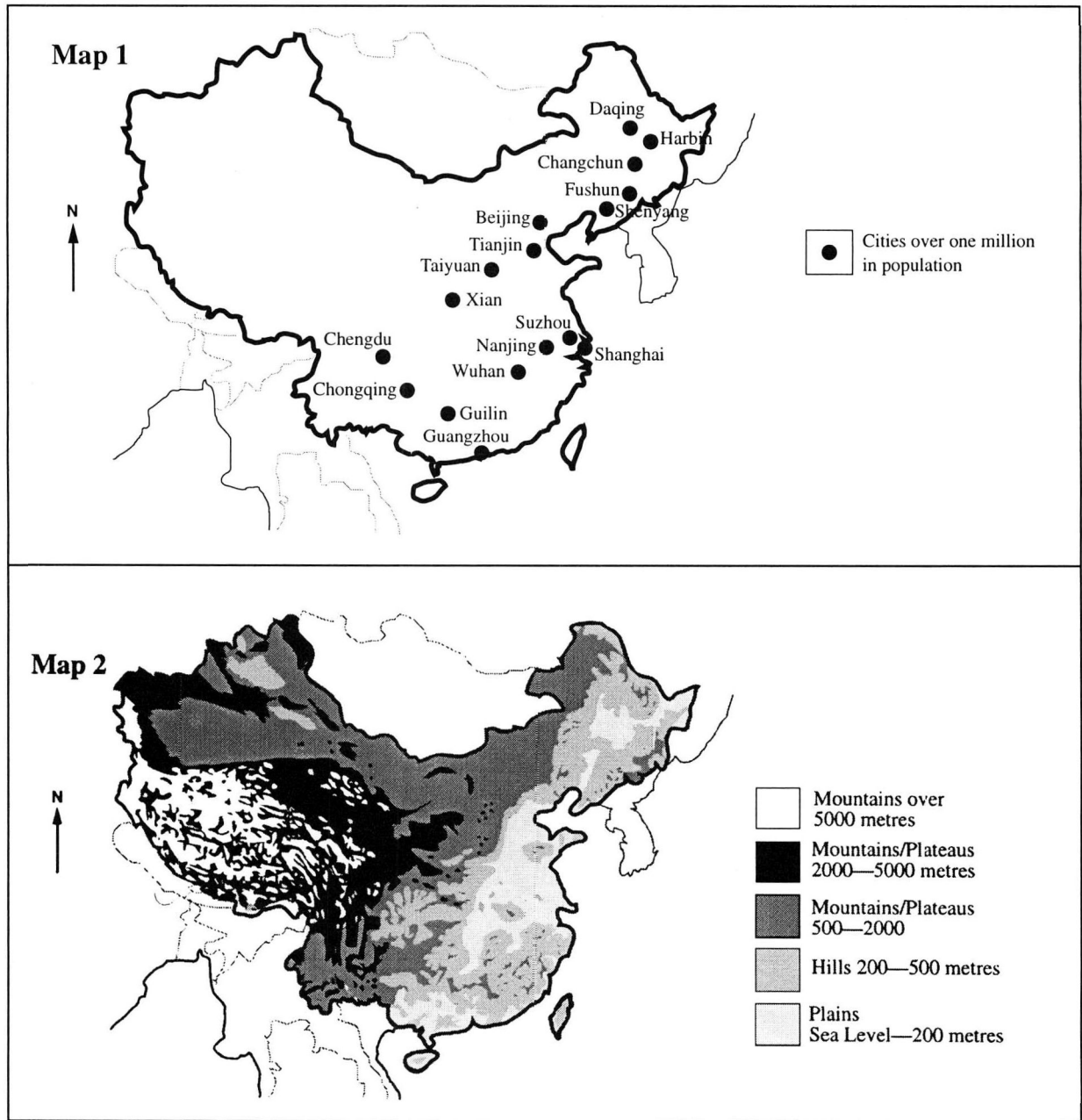
8. The **most likely** reason for the provincial government decision was that
- A. the largest population is served by Greenview Hospital
 - B. half of the people in the Charity Hospital area signed the petition
 - C. less than half of the people in the Greenview Hospital area signed the petition
 - D. more people supported Charity Hospital than Greenview Hospital
9. What is the **best** conclusion that can be made from the information?
- A. Individuals should take care of their own needs.
 - B. Governments should take care of individual citizens' needs.
 - C. Lobby groups usually influence government decisions.
 - D. Government action can affect people both positively and negatively.

Use the following information to answer question 10.

Groups That Help Meet Our Needs	Examples of Needs Met
Group W	armed forces, Supreme Court
Group X	hospitals, schools
Group Y	fire stations, swimming pools
Group Z	houses, food

10. Basic needs met by the Canadian federal government are listed beside
- A. Group W
 - B. Group X
 - C. Group Y
 - D. Group Z
-
11. Which of the following needs is the responsibility of local governments in Canada?
- A. Street lights
 - B. Universities
 - C. Mail delivery
 - D. Highways
12. From which port would Alberta goods **most likely** be shipped to China?
- A. Halifax
 - B. Montreal
 - C. Toronto
 - D. Vancouver
13. A number of students from China are attending Canadian universities. When they return to China, they will **most** influence other Chinese citizens' lifestyles by
- A. keeping the traditional way of life in their communities
 - B. working harder at their different jobs
 - C. assuming a greater role in government decision making
 - D. sharing new ideas to continue modernization

Use the following maps to answer questions 14 and 15.



14. In what range of elevation are most cities over one million people located?

- A. Over 5000 metres
- B. 2000 to 5000 metres
- C. 500 to 2000 metres
- D. Sea level to 500 metres

15. The two maps support which generalization?
- A. There are 17 million people living in the eastern part of China.
 - B. Most of the people in China live on the hills and plains.
 - C. Most of China's land consists of hills and plains.
 - D. Thirty percent of the people in China live on the North China Plain.
-
16. The official policy of the Chinese government is to encourage families to have only one child. This policy
- A. increases control of China's population growth
 - B. increases freedom of choice for the family
 - C. decreases the size of family income
 - D. decreases the production of food

Key and Descriptors for Practice Questions

Each sample question is classified according to the topic on which it is based. In addition, the curriculum standards for each question are included.

Item	Key	Topic	Component*	Category**	Curriculum Standard
1	C	B	S	G/M	Interpret maps showing physical features
2	C	B	S	G/M	Use latitude–longitude grid to identify location
3	D	B	K	C	Know examples of psychological needs
4	A	B	K	C	Understand some important religious beliefs of Ancient Greeks
5	D	B	K	C	Understand chronology, B.C. and A.D.
6	B	A	S	G/M	Use latitude–longitude grid to identify location of a provincial/territorial capital
7	B	A	K	G	Understand that some needs are met by different levels of government
8	A	A	S	L	Interpret information about decision making by elected officials
9	D	A	S	A	Synthesize information to select best conclusion
10	A	A	K	F	Identify needs met by the federal government
11	A	A	K	F	Identify needs met by local government
12	D	C	K	F	Know location of China in relation to Canada
13	D	C	K	G	Understand that ideas shared among countries influence lifestyles
14	D	C	S	G/M	Infer relationships from data shown on maps
15	B	C	S	G/M	Interpret maps to make a generalization
16	A	C	K	F	Know that government influences the way people meet their basic needs

*Component: K—Knowledge
S—Skills

**Category: A—Analyzing, Synthesizing, Evaluating
C—Concepts
F—Facts
G—Generalizations
G/M—Geography/Mapping
L—Locating, Organizing, Interpreting Information

Preparing Students for the Test

The best way to prepare students for writing the social studies achievement test is to use instructional time teaching the important learnings as set out in the *Program of Studies*.

Teachers are also encouraged to familiarize their students with the types of questions that will appear on the test by discussing the practice questions included in this bulletin.

Teachers may also wish to familiarize their students with the format of multiple-choice questions.

Suggestions for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

- Consider all forms of information provided. Information will be presented not only in words but also in visual forms such as cartoons, pictures, charts, or maps.
- When answering “best answer” questions, be sure to carefully read all four alternatives (A, B, C, and D) before

choosing the answer that you think is best. These questions will always include a bold-faced qualifier such as **best**, **most strongly**, or **most clearly** in their stems. All of the alternatives (A, B, C, and D) are, to some degree, correct, but one of the alternatives will be “best” in that it takes more of the information into account or can be supported most strongly by reference to the information.

- If a correct or best answer does not become obvious to you fairly quickly, eliminate the answers that seem least appropriate and then use your judgement to select an answer from those that remain.
- When you are given information to be used with more than one question, remember to go back to the information before answering each question.

For further suggestions, see *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities*, Alberta Education, Special Education Branch, pages LD 122 to 124.

Alberta Education Contact

Questions or comments regarding this bulletin should be directed to:

Doug Burns
Social Studies Assessment Specialist
Provincial Achievement Testing Program
Student Evaluation Branch
Alberta Education
Box 43
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2

Telephone: 403-427-0010
FAX: 403-422-3206
E-mail address: dburns@edc.gov.ab.ca

To be connected toll-free in Alberta, dial 310-0000.

